



US Army Corps
of Engineers
St. Paul District

Information Paper

Environmental Protection: Mississippi River, Harpers Slough, Pool 9, Iowa



Harpers Slough area in pool 9 of the Mississippi River

Contact

Don Powell, project manager
(651) 290-5402 (651) 290-5258 (fax)
donald.l.powell@usace.army.mil

Location/Description

Part of the Corps' Environmental Management Program (EMP), the Harpers Slough area is a 3,000-acre backwater located primarily on the Iowa side of the Mississippi River in pool 9, about nine miles south of Lansing, Iowa. The site lies within the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The area is valuable habitat used heavily by tundra swans, Canada geese, puddle and diving ducks, black terns, nesting eagles, bitterns, and cormorants. The area is also significant as a fish nursery area. Wave action and ice movement have eroded or depleted many of the channel border islands. The reduction and loss of these islands allows more turbulence in the backwater area, resulting in less productive habitat for fish and wildlife. Harpers Slough is one of the few remaining areas in lower pool 9 where high quality habitat could be maintained. The proposed project would restore about 15,000 feet of islands at the upper end of the area and stabilize about 7,000 feet of islands in the lower portion of the area. Material to construct islands would be dredged from the backwater areas or near the main channel. The project would reduce the loss of existing islands and reduce flow of sediment-laden water into the quieter backwaters. It would also provide increased diversity of land and shoreline habitats.

Status

General design for the project was begun in 1996. A Definite Project Report will be completed in 2001. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2002.

Authority

The Harpers Slough Habitat Project is being planned under the authority of the Upper Mississippi River System - EMP. The EMP was authorized by Section 1103 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986 and reauthorized by WRDA 1999.

The project is being planned and designed as part of a cooperative effort among the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Iowa and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources and local interests.

Fiscal

Project design and construction costs would be 100 percent federal because the project is located on national wildlife refuge lands. Operation and maintenance costs would be 100 percent federal (a responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Federal cost	\$6,530,000
Non-federal cost	\$0
Total estimated cost	\$6,530,000